

THE GLOBAL VILLAGE – A SCHOOL OF MOTIVATION

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Abstract: In spite of having studied English for several years, many Indonesian students are not able to communicate in English, due to lack of self-confidence and motivation, as well as a lack of communicative teaching methods and activities in schools. A review of literature shows that creating a relaxed environment and allowing students to take charge of their own teaching and learning is conducive to increased motivation and better language acquisition. The goal of Global Village is to promote self-confidence and motivate the students in a disadvantaged village to utilize English in real-life situations, thereby creating more opportunities for them in the future. Global Village uses a learning system that promotes realistic communicative interaction and confidence in a positive, supportive environment. This program is also innovative and unique because it turns learning upside-down and inside out, wherein children are teaching each other. Global Village could be used as a model by the Ministry of Education and the Teacher's Association to implement more communicative techniques in their programming, or even establish a nation-wide program.

Introduction

One of the primary challenges in the English education of Indonesian youth is student motivation—or to be exact, their lack of it. In many occasions, Indonesian youth learn English because their school or their parents tell them to do so, not out of personal interest. If they are interested in joining an English class, their motivation is to gain good grades, not to achieve English competency. As a nation, we have brought up our students to think that their top priority in learning English is earning a high grade nationally or at least in their school or region, so that they can enter top universities.

Student motivation is an aspect of English education that, unfortunately, most students do not have at formal schools in Indonesia. If there are students who are interested in learning English, our teaching methodologies simply do not encourage them to be highly motivated and truly involved in the learning process to dedicate their time to practice their English.

Because of this perceived lack of motivation, Romeo Rissal founded the Global Village to bridge the gap between the students' language needs and their motivation to achieve those needs. The Global Village, as the name suggests, is a community as well as a concept of global education and development. Not only is it a place for the children to have an English course, it is a school of motivation in a true meaning of the word. It is meant to open up students' horizons and introduce them to a more meaningful process of education.

Current Educational Practices in Indonesia

Since the very beginning of their education, the students are not directed or encouraged to be able to communicate in English fluently, which would be very useful for them to achieve a brilliant career in the future. Although the curriculum designers have designed the standard competencies and basic competencies for each skill in English lesson (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), the materials usually focus only on understanding grammar and written texts (Competency-Based Curriculum known as KBK 2004). In general, most if not all high schools students cannot speak English although they have spent more than 9 years studying English. Even few of them who can speak English are those whose parents can send them overseas to study English or take non formal English course for a few years.

In elementary school, students are introduced to a variety of simple vocabulary in English, but not directed at its use in practicing simple phrases related to their daily activities. The English lesson becomes less fun when the teaching-learning method and the learning environment are monotonous and lacking in creative and interactive activities. Meanwhile, at the junior and senior high schools, English is seen as an ordinary subject that will be tested on the national exam. Most of these high schools only expect their students to obtain a high score on the national exam specifically in Grammar and Reading regardless of whether they have mastered the English for communication.¹

The Formation of Highly Motivated Individuals (HMI)

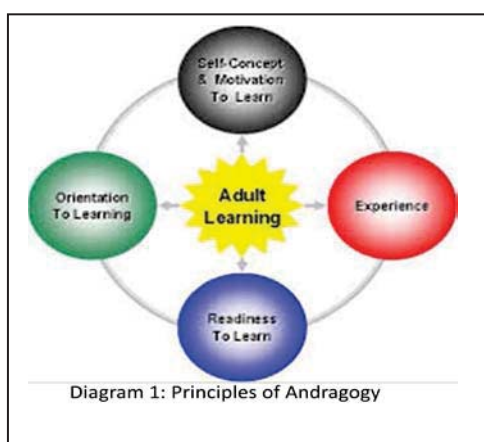
At the Global Village, English speaking is our total commitment. We strive to achieve it in an unconventional way. We do not teach English. We manage learning processes. We pay serious attention on motivating our students to practice their English in and out of “classrooms” for we strongly believe that

¹ Bire, Jos Mismatched English Education In Indonesia, FKIP Undana-Kupang, 2009

motivation is the most important catalyzing ingredient of effective learning. In other words, our mission is to help students through a variety ways of motivation and encouragement that they do not get in the regular schools.

To help establish a motivating environment, we develop a learning system. The focus of our work is develop learners' speaking habit and to ensure that each and every one of our students develops a sense of personal motivation, not only in learning English, but specifically in using it with their friends and in their daily activities. They become interested in using English in their everyday life through listening and reading as input to produce speaking and writing as output of English learning. They do them all in a fun way. We also employ the basic principles of community-based learning in which motivation building is one of the very basic aspects.

A motivated individual, as defined by Stipek (2002), is "someone who is actively engaged in the learning process"². According to Stipek (2002), motivated students understand and master skills, are enthusiastic and optimistic, enjoy their tasks at school and are proud of their accomplishments. Therefore, this is what we have to help our students achieve. We must move from just having a student at school to "a motivated student" and finally to "a highly motivated student" i.e. a student who understands and masters skills, is enthusiastic and optimistic, enjoys their tasks, and is proud of their accomplishments. Many people have a passing interest in learning English, but this is not enough. We must help our students to be HMI.

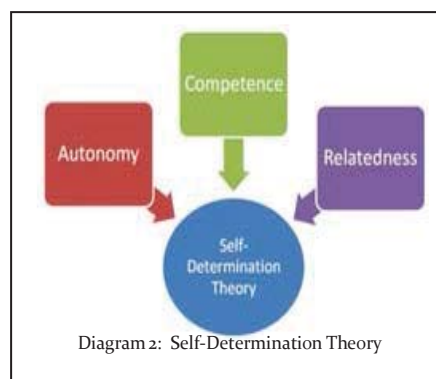


To help our students to achieve this quality of HMI, we refer to the concept of Andragogy³. To understand the theory in its full context may take a long explanation for which we need to start by understanding pedagogy first. In a nutshell, Knowles' philosophical orientation has its roots in the humanistic, pragmatic, and existential frameworks of John Dewey, Eduard Lindeman, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers and Vygotsky. As seen in the above diagram, he believes in the fundamental goodness of human beings specifically in their self-concept, experience, readiness to learn and in the orientation to learn. He also accentuates that environmental conditions can – and often do – inhibit the fulfillment of these beliefs and that part of the mission of adult educators is to influence environment. Knowles believes that although this concept is for adult learning, it can also be used for children. At the Global Village, we find various creative ways in using the basic principles of Andragogy even to

our young learners. We, for instance, begin each class with building up "young learners' self-concept" in a very simple way. We start with a simple discussion on what they want to be and what they can become. We talk, again in a very simple language, what English ability can do to their further education, jobs and even their future. We also make use of their learning experience. A third grade high school student, for example, has spent more than 9 years of English learning, albeit without being able to use it. In other words, those nine years of learning have produced tremendous latent English knowledge. We then develop various techniques to "bring out" their latent knowledge so that they can use them for speaking English.

However, the four basic concepts above need to be developed systematically to help improve students' motivations simply because no one is born with them. It has become our foremost and top priority. And we need to be creative, to say the least. And it is certainly not a one-shot activity. Motivation building is a series of continuous efforts because there are times whereby some students who start as very enthusiastic students but for whatever reason at a certain time they simply lose their interest.

Specifically, Deci and Ryan (2002) believe that learning will take place more effectively if three conditions are available. Their motivation theory is known as SDT (Self-Determination Theory) that can be seen in Diagram 2. The SDT stipulates that autonomy, competence and relatedness significantly contribute to learners' learning motivation. A learner who is given certain autonomy in learning will have higher intrinsic motivation than the one controlled by a teacher in a classroom-like condition. Likewise, a learner will become more motivated to learn when she or he knows or feels that her or his competence is improving. We, as learning



² Stipek, D. (2002). *Motivation to learn: From theory to practice* (4th edition). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon. - See more at: <http://cepa.stanford.edu/content/motivation-learn-theory-practice-4th-edition>

³ Knowles, M. S. (1980). *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy* (2nd ed.). Chicago

facilitators and motivators have to develop creative ways or techniques to help them feel that their ability is improving. In a similar manner, a learner will also develop higher motivation when she or he is more “related to the learning activities” i.e. more active and more engaged in a learning process. More speaking practices with soul mates and groups will boost their motivation. The teacher’s job then becomes that of a motivator or facilitator.

Motivational Methods at Global Village

Based upon these concepts of motivation and learning, we; at the Global Village, aim to drive the students to be highly motivated in learning and using English in their everyday activities. We develop a learning system whereby Improving Learners’ Motivation is one of the very essential sub-systems. We take Bryan Adam’s song title as an icon of the Global Village: “*Every Thing We Do, We Do It for Motivation*” We also promote the use of fun, communicative learning activities, and even turn teaching upside down and inside out by putting students in charge of the teaching and learning, as described by Zirbes (2014).

Here are five steps we have taken to build the students’ motivation in the Global Village.

1. *Change the students’ attitudes by opening up their horizon on the use of English and its advantages.*

The first thing we do at the Global Village is to expand the students’ horizons of how they can use English. These children, who previously did not know what to do with English, are shown the view of brilliant career in the future if they master this foreign language. This is very important because often they do not get any kind of encouragement and motivation from their parents. Disadvantageous circumstances oblige the children to help their parents by working in the fields after school. Consequently, their attitude in learning generally becomes lower, especially in regards to English. They do not know what education is for, since they believe that they will inevitably have the same work as their parents.

Therefore, after finishing the activity, these kids always get an injection of motivation from the Princesses (the head language facilitators at Global Village). The form of motivation that is given is quite simple. For example, we tell them that once they have mastered English; their chance to get a scholarship in any foreign country will be wide open. We also tell them that one of the keys of some successful people around them who got the chance to study abroad was mastering English. We consistently remind the children of this in the Global Village because we do believe that lifelong motivation can change their mindset and attitude toward learning English particularly, and education in general.

2. *Create a fun learning environment*

We do not have classrooms in the Global Village. The learning process is set naturally and informally. The students gather in their groups along a narrow street in front of the villagers’ houses or at the edge of the paddy fields. This situation creates an air of fun, freedom, relaxation to the learning process (Zirbes, 2014). The students are free to choose the place for their group to practice the English as long as they feel comfortable and practice the material seriously.

3. *Build up the students’ self-confidence by taking the advantages of being together (Soulmate Learning)*

The Global Village uses Soulmate Learning as a technique to assist learners to practice their English. Each student must have a Soulmate, a partner with whom the student can practice using English. This technique facilitates the students to practice together with their soulmate face-to-face inside and outside the class. During this process, these soulmates will practice together in making questions and answers.

On the surface, Soulmate Learning seems similar to pairwork. However, philosophically and practically they are different. Pairwork, as defined by Phipps, is “any form of pupil-pupil interaction without the intervention of the teacher” (Phipps, 1999), whereas soulmate learning signifies deeper and mutual support learning between two learners in and out of classroom. If the intent of pair work is to minimize teacher’s involvement and provide ample opportunity for the learners to practice their English face-to-face in the classroom, the soulmate learning is aimed more at mutually supportive learning out of the class for it is believed that the learners have much more time out of their classroom to practice English. The philosophy of soulmate learning is that learning should naturally take place more out of the classroom and an individual needs a companion to learn (Rissal, 2014).

Soulmate Learning plays a role in building the students’ self-confidence to speak. When studying at school, the assignment of speaking in front of the class is frightening for these students. They feel anxious about making mistakes and being mocked by their friends, so their self-confidence fades. Soulmate Learning helps the Global Village students deal with this problem by providing mutual support. It aims to train them to be more confident having the real conversation with native English speakers. As the result, their self-confidence is increased. Whenever the Global Village is visited by native speakers such as American English Language Fellows, Australian students, or even tourists, these kids do not feel as awkward anymore in conversation. Even if they feel shy at first, at the end of the session they confidently ask many questions.

4. *Select the Super buddies*

The concept of Super buddies is “kids teaching kids”. The teachers function as “Hawk” i.e. motivators overseeing each learning process. In every meeting, the Princesses always monitor and evaluate the progress of each pair of Soulmates. The Soulmates, who are considered to be highly motivated, have high self-confidence and discipline, and have a superior speaking ability, will be selected as the Super buddies. Super buddies are in effect the teachers of the other children. Their job is to lead and handle the small groups. They will help these groups in the learning process. These Super buddies are trained to lead their groups during the learning process and motivate their fellow students. They are also challenged to use creative activities during the learning process.

We select the best Soulmates to be the Super Buddies. It is intended to make sure each Soulmates really supports each other to cooperate and assist in their learning process so that their ability becomes equal and balanced. The selection of the Super Buddies also aims to motivate other Soulmates to improve their performance and eventually will be also chosen to be the new Super Buddies.

The result is that the Super Buddies manage their group very well and are able to create many fun activities with their groups. The learning process becomes more fun, and the students learn more because one tends to be a better learner when they are teaching.

5. *Create Community Learning.*

When each student has been motivated and gets a high self-confidence, it is the time for the students to be involved in community learning. In Soulmate Learning, the students work together with their partner. In Community Learning, these Soulmates interact with the pairs in a larger group. The students share their thoughts, ideas, experiences, stories, and opinion through small discussion. Sharing can be a fun learning because it is “a two-way process: explaining to others and listening to them, and reacting to them” (Jones, 2007). Upon sharing, there are many kinds of reactions and interactions, such as smiles, laughter, surprise, sympathy, agreement and disagreement. This support network leads to higher motivation and less anxiety to use English.

Conclusion

At the Global Village, we believe that motivation is a cornerstone to improve the students’ achievement in the learning process. In other words, motivation is the name of the game when it comes to language learning or education for that matter. We believe that, the failure of most schools to ensure that their students do speak English is because the students’ motivation aspect is not well-managed. We believe that when a learner is highly motivated to learn English, it is not “learning” any more. It is a sheer enjoyment. She or he will achieve a condition of “Otodidak” (Indonesian for self-directed learning).

As concluded by Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels (1994), “English achievement is related significantly to self-confidence, the evaluation of the learning environment and the motivational indices.” We strive to create a positive environment for student motivation to bloom. As the first step to develop the concept of this learning process nationally, the Global Village’s team has started collaboration with two leading universities in West Sumatera; Padang State University and Andalas University. At Padang State University we have a program, called International Hotel Management while the program at Andalas University is called the Global Campus. We do not want to be stuck and stop there. A “pesantren” (Indonesian for Islamic boarding school) called Pesantren Hidayatullah in West Java has also started this program and it is called the Global Pesantren. In this way we hope to contribute to the educational and occupational success of Indonesian youth, and consequently improve our nation’s future as a whole.

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